

22,237 acres

have been mined and reclaimed so far in North Dakota



AND THIS IS HOW IT'S DONE...



1.) OBTAIN MINING RIGHTS

The first step for the company is to obtain the land and mineral rights of the property they plan to mine. They also collect baseline ecological data on the property.

2.) ESTABLISH WATER MANAGEMENT

The next step is to establish sediment ponds where the water can safely drain. Sediments must settle out before the water meets EPA regulations.

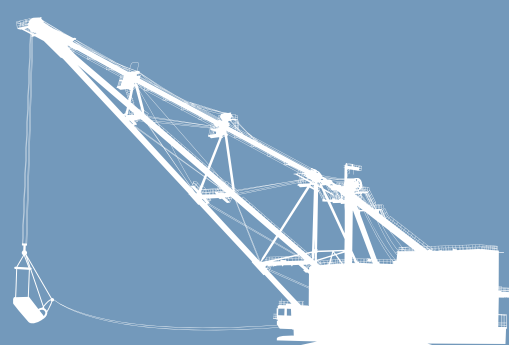


3.) REMOVE TOPSOIL AND SUBSOIL

Subsoil and topsoil must be removed. The dirt is then either spread onto reclaimed land or saved to spread at a later date.

4.) REMOVE OVERBURDEN AND COAL

North Dakota mines use draglines, loading shovels, hydraulic excavators and haul trucks to remove overburden and coal. The haul trucks then move the coal to a truck dump where it is crushed and delivered to a customer.



5.) GRADE SPOILS

The spoils are usually graded toward the active pit. Once graded, the spoils must mimic the original lay of the land and be approved by the PSC before subsoil and topsoil can be spread.

6.) SPREAD SUBSOIL AND TOPSOIL, SEED GRASSES OR CROPS

Soil is spread then tilled and rocks are removed from cropland before seeding. Native grassland is seeded with native plants and the reclaimed land is utilized by local farmers and ranchers.



7.) OBTAIN BOND RELEASE

Ten years after mining has ended, the land is eligible for bond release. To qualify, the land must be as productive as it was prior to mining. Wildlife, wetlands, trees and other ecological material is also reviewed.